

## Summary

The present invention relates to a method for operating an internal combustion engine in which a valve needle of a fuel injector is adjusted from a closing position via an intermediate position to an opening position and back again. The adjustment is carried out with the aid of a piezoelectric actuator to which a trigger signal (SA) is applied. To reduce the contamination danger of the fuel injector and to keep wear of the valve needle low, the trigger signal (SA) for triggering the piezoelectric actuator has a greater slope steepness during the transition of the valve needle from the closing position to the intermediate position than during the transition of the valve needle from the intermediate position to the opening position.

(Figure 1)